



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ROY WILKINS

PART 10 OF 11

BUFILE: 62-78270

Section 10

RECORDED

INDEXED

90-1339-1

(b)(7)(e)

November 16, 1937

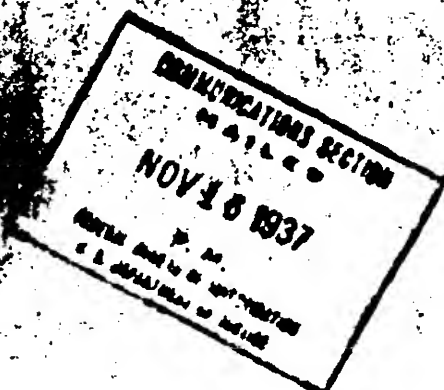
MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL E. HANCOCK

This will acknowledge receipt of your memorandum dated November 13, 1937, transmitting a photostatic copy of a letter to the Attorney General from Mr. Ray Wilkins, Assistant Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, New York, New York dated November 11, 1937, relative to an alleged violation of the Peonage Statute at Bailey, Arkansas.

This matter has been referred to the Little Rock, Arkansas Office of this Bureau for investigation, and you will be appropriately advised of all developments in this case.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.



(b)(7)(e)

RECORDED
4 90-1379-2
INDEXED

November 16, 1937

90-1379

Special Agent in Charge,
Little Rock, Arkansas.

Dear Sir:

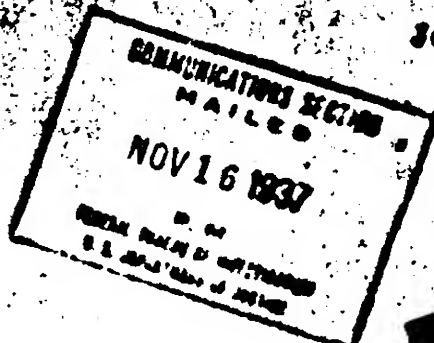
Attached hereto are copies of a letter dated November 11, 1937 received by the Attorney General from Mr. Ray Wilkins, Assistant Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, New York City, wherein it is stated that thirty negroes are being held virtually as slaves in a stockade at Malley, Arkansas, and are being worked at the point of guns. (b)(7)(c) (b)

You are requested to conduct a discreet investigation relative to Mr. Wilkins' allegations to determine whether a violation of the Peonage Statute is involved herein.

This matter should be placed in line for prompt investigative attention, and a report should be submitted to the Bureau at the earliest possible date.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.



167X

January 5, 1938.

60-1359

Special Agent in Charge,
Little Rock, Arkansas.

RE:

UNKNOWN SUBJECTS;
ROY WILKINS, COMPLAINT,
FUGITIVE.

Dear Sir:

The Bureau file in the above entitled case indicates that this case is not receiving prompt investigative attention in your division.

This matter should be placed in line for early investigative attention and you should submit a report to the Bureau at the earliest possible date.

Very truly yours,

J. E. Hoover

John Edgar Hoover.

DIRECTOR.

RECORDED

50-1359-2

JAN 11 1938

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
MAILED
JAN - 5 1938
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FILE

h7c

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Post Office Box 1469
Little Rock, Arkansas
January 13, 1938

Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D. C.

RE: UNKNOWN SUBJECTS;
ROY WILLIAMS; COMPLAINANT;
FUGITIVE.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to Bureau communication of January 8, 1938 (50-1359), which instructs that this matter be given prompt investigative attention.

The failure to give this matter attention at an earlier date has been due to the fact that the agent to whom the case has been assigned has been unable to proceed with the investigation due to other matters which he has been handling elsewhere. This matter will be given attention at the earliest possible date.

Very truly yours,

Clarence Fletcher
CLARENCE FLETCHER,
Special Agent in Charge.

RECORDED

50-1359-3

JAN 17 1938

Post Office Box 1400
Little Rock, Arkansas
January 19, 1937

Special Agent in Charge
New York, New York

RE: FREDERICK S. JONES;
ROY WILKINS, COMPLAINT;
FUGITIVE.

Dear Sir:

Under date of November 11, 1937, Mr. Roy Wilkins, Assistant Secretary of the National Association for Advancement of Colored People, 65 Fifth Avenue, New York City, addressed a communication to the Attorney General, in which he advises that thirty negroes are being held virtually as slaves in a stockade at Halley, Arkansas, and are being worked at the point of gun. It is stated in this letter that the information has been relayed to Mr. Wilkins by way of Chicago, Illinois, and he urges an immediate investigation of this situation at Halley.

For your information, several complaints have been received through the above named Association, one particularly to which I refer is a complaint made by [redacted] Memphis, Tennessee, who, on July 18, 1937, addressed a letter to the Department of Justice, in Washington, complaining of the fact that three negro boys who were residents of Memphis, had been detained at Halley, Arkansas, on a plantation of one [redacted]. For your complete information, I am forwarding a copy of this communication, together with the report of Special Agent [redacted] dated at Memphis, Tennessee, September 24, 1937, entitled [redacted], which sets forth an interview with [redacted] and furnishes information to the effect that the victims, [redacted] all colored, were at that time residing in Chicago and New York City.

Special Agent [redacted] of this office, conducted investigation in connection with this matter, same being reflected in his report rendered in connection with the above mentioned case and dated [redacted], 1937, copy of which report is furnished for your information.

The letter was presented in its entirety to the United States Attorney, at Little Rock, on December 2, 1937, at which time prosecution was declined, in view of the fact that the Fugitive Statute, in the opinion of the United States Attorney, had not been violated.

It appears that there is a possibility that the instant complaint is based upon information which is an outgrowth of the case entitled [redacted] and it is for this reason that [redacted]

50-1359-3X
ONE

Special Agent in Charge
New York, New York

January 17, 1938

The matter is being referred to your office, with the request that Mr. Wilkins be interviewed and that full and complete information be obtained from him concerning the thirty persons, or at least a few of them, who are being held at Halley, Arkansas, in order that the investigation may be brought to a logical conclusion. At the present time, appropriate inquiry is being made by agents of this office at Halley, Arkansas, particularly of

It is further desired that you ascertain from Mr. Wilkins the sources of his information, in order that the complainants may be interviewed.

Very truly yours,

CLARENCE FLETCHER,
Special Agent in Charge.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT

Little Rock, Ark.

N.Y.

PLANNED

DO-6

SK

REPORT MADE AT NEW YORK CITY	DATE WHEN MADE 2/1/38	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 1/27, 29, 31/38	REPORT MADE BY <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 1.2em; display: inline-block;"></div> b5/c
TITLE UNKNOWN SUBJECTS; BOY WILKINS - COMPLAINANT			CHARACTER OF CASE PEONAGE
<p>SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Boy Wilkins, National Association for Advancement of Colored People, advised his information relative to alleged violation of Peonage Statute at Halley, Arkansas obtained from his Association's representative in Chicago and no information about persons held yet received.</p> <p style="text-align: right; margin-right: 100px;">R. U. Co.</p> <p>REFERENCE:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Letter from Little Rock Office dated January 17, 1938.</p> <p>DETAILS:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><u>AT NEW YORK CITY</u></p> <p>BOY WILKINS, (colored), Assistant Secretary of the National Association for Advancement of Colored People, 69 Fifth Avenue, New York City, was interviewed by the writer relative to the communication addressed to the Attorney General under date of November 11, 1937, in which he advised that thirty negroes were being held, virtually as slaves, in a stockade at Halley, Arkansas, and are being worked at the point of guns. Wilkins indicated in his letter that the information had been relayed to him by way of Chicago, Ill.</p>			
<p>COPIES OF THIS REPORT</p> <p>1 - Bureau</p> <p>2 - Little Rock</p> <p>2 - Chicago</p> <p>2 - New York</p>		<p>DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold;">5011359 4</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">FEB - 4 AM.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">FEB 7 1938</p>	

50-3.

At the time of the writer's interview with Mr. Wilkins, he stated that the only information he had relative to the alleged violation of the Peonage Statute at Halley, Arkansas, was contained in a telegram addressed to Attorney CHARLES E. HOUSTON, of the Association, at 69 Fifth Avenue, New York City, from GEORGE A. BLAKEY, the Chicago representative of the Association. He exhibited the telegram to the writer which is being set forth at this point for ready reference:

November 10, 1937

Attorney Charles E. Houston,
69 Fifth Avenue
New York City

[REDACTED] TOGETHER WITH THIRTY OTHER
NEGROES SOLD AND HELD SLAVES IN STOCKADE
AT HALLEY ARKANSAS FORGET AT POINT OF GUNS
HAVE FEDERAL OFFICERS INVESTIGATE AT ONCE
EXTREME CAUTION OF URGENT IMPORTANCE TO
PROTECT PRISONERS LIVES [REDACTED] (b)(7)(c); (b)

(signed) George A. Blakey
Chicago Branch N.A.A.C.P.,
Room 215, 345 State St.,
Chicago, Ill.

As indicated in the above mentioned communication to the Attorney General, Wilkins stated that he had no information as to the names of the negroes allegedly held in peonage aside from the [REDACTED] mentioned in the telegram, and he suggested that agents of the Bureau interview George A. Blakey at Chicago, Illinois for more detailed information. (b)(7)(c)

He indicated at this time that he had no information about the alleged violation of the Peonage Statute involving negroes named [REDACTED] from Memphis, Tenn., in Desha County at McDonnet, Arkansas in June 1937, as reflected in the reports of Special Agent [REDACTED] dated at Little Rock, Arkansas, dated December 1, 1937, and Special Agent [REDACTED], dated at Memphis, Tenn., September 24, 1937. [REDACTED] (b)(7)(c)

50-3.

[REDACTED] b6 b7C
who is being, or has been, interviewed by agents of the Little
Rock Office at [REDACTED] with reference to this matter.

UNDEVELOPED LEADS:

CHICAGO OFFICE:

At Chicago, Ill. - Will interview GEORGE A.
HARRY, National Association for the Advancement of Colored
People, Room 213, 54th South State Street, for detailed information
relative to the alleged violation of the Peonage Statute, as con-
tained in his telegram to the New York office of the Association,
dated November 10, 1937, as set out in the body of this report.

The names and addresses of the negroes
allegedly held, together with the details surrounding their arrest,
should be obtained.

REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO OFFICE OF ORIGIN.

March 1, 1938

██████████ (b)(5)(c)
50-1359

Special Agent in Charge,
Little Rock, Arkansas.

RE: UNKNOWN SUBJECTS;
ROY WILKINS - COMPLAINANT;
FRODOG.

Dear Sir:

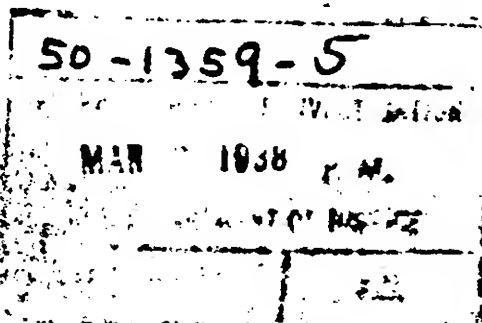
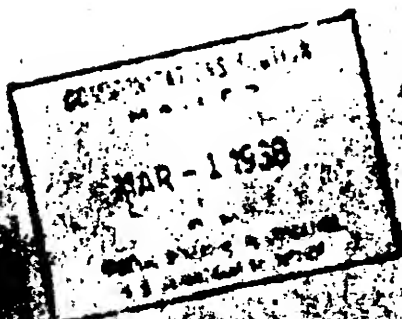
The Bureau file in the above entitled case indicates that this case is not receiving prompt investigative attention in your division.

This matter should be placed in line for early investigative attention and you should submit a report to the Bureau at the earliest possible date.

Very truly yours,

J. E. Hoover

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.



Q. J. L. [redacted]

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	
DOMESTIC	FOREIGN
TELEGRAM	FULL RATE
DAY LETTER	DAY LETTER
NIGHT MESSAGE	NIGHT MESSAGE
NIGHT LETTER	NIGHT LETTER
CABLE	CABLE
RADIOGRAM	RADIOGRAM

PAYMENT SHOULD BE MADE IN ADVANCE. PAYMENTS SHOULD BE MADE IN ADVANCE. PAYMENTS SHOULD BE MADE IN ADVANCE.

Postal Telegraph

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM



RECEIVER'S NUMBER
CHECK
TIME FILED
STANDARD TIME

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

FBI LITTLE ROCK, ARK. MAY 7, 1938 1:20 PM

D. W. LADD
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
1900 BANKERS BUILDING
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

URSUS RAY WILKINS COMPLAINT PRONAGE DISCONTINUE CASE CLOSED

FLETCHER

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
GOVERNMENT RATE
CHARGE - FBI LITTLE ROCK

50-1329-

MAY 10 1938

ONE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

FILE NO. 62-25

REPORT MADE AT LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS	DATE WHEN MADE 5-6-38	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 4-28, 4-3-38	REPORT MADE BY <div style="background-color: black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
TITLE WILLIAMS STENOGRAPHS; WILLIAMS - C. WILKINS			CHARACTER OF CASE ESPIONAGE b6b7C

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

No evidence uncovered to indicate complaint by National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, New York, New York, that thirty negroes are being held virtually as slaves in a stockade at Halley, Arkansas, and worked at the point of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] United States Attorney at Little Rock, declined prosecution, May 3, 1938.

- 2 -

REFERENCE:

Bureau letter dated November 16, 1937.

Report of Special Agent [REDACTED] New York City, dated February 1, 1938.

DETAILS:

This investigation is predicated upon a letter received by the Attorney General from Mr. C. W. WILLIAMS, Assistant Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, New York City, dated November 11, 1937, in which it was stated that thirty negroes were being held virtually as slaves in a stockade at Halley, Arkansas, and were

Approved for Release Special Agent in Charge [Signature]		DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES <div style="font-size: 24pt; font-weight: bold;">50-11359-6</div> <div style="font-size: 18pt; font-weight: bold;">MAY 10 1938</div>
New York City [Signature] [Signature] [Signature]	MAY 12 1938 [Signature] [Signature]	

been worked at the point of [REDACTED]

(b)(1), (b)(7)

This letter was referred by the Attorney General to
the Bureau for appropriate investigation.

(b)(1), (b)(7)

[REDACTED]

6570/107

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

These facts were discussed on May 3, 1938 with the United States Attorney, Fred A. Iegris, at Little Rock, Arkansas, who stated that there is no indication of any violation of the Peonage Statute; that the county work farm at Halley, Arkansas was a regular detention farm for prisoners, and as long as the prisoners were formally charged and sentenced in the Court of law they were lawfully detained; that since there was no indication that any negroes were being unlawfully detained at Halley, Arkansas, prosecution would not be authorized in this case.

ENCLOSURES:

TO THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY, LITTLE ROCK:

Letter dated November 22, 1937 from Eileen McMahon, Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, Washington, D. C. to FRED A. IEGRIS, United States Attorney, Little Rock, Arkansas.

ENCLOSURES: (Cont.)

TO THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY, LITTLE ROCK:

Photostatic copy of letter dated November 11,
1987 from ROY WILKINS, Assistant Secretary, National Assoc-
iation for the Advancement of Colored People, New York City,
New York to the Attorney General at Washington, D. C.

C L O S E D

6661
50-1359-6

May 14, 1938

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL McMANIS

Re: UNKNOWN SUBJECTS
ROY WILKINS - Complainant
PEONAGE

Reference is made to my memorandum of November 16, 1937, acknowledging the receipt of your memorandum dated November 13, 1937, relative to an alleged violation of the Peonage Statute at Bailey, Arkansas, reported to the Attorney General by Mr. Roy Wilkins, Assistant Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, New York, New York.

Please be advised that investigation of this matter has been completed by the Little Rock, Arkansas, office of this Bureau, with the result that it has been ascertained that no factual basis exists for the allegations made.

A copy of the report of Special Agent [redacted] dated at Little Rock, Arkansas, May 6, 1938, reporting the closing of this investigation, has already been furnished to you.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
MAILED

MAY 16 1938

P. M.
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Mr. Nathan	
Mr. Tolson	
Mr. Clegg	
Mr. Glavin	
Mr. Ladd	
Mr. Nichols	
Mr. Rosen	
Mr. Tracy	
Mr. Carson	
Mr. Egan	
Mr. Gurnea	
Mr. Hendon	
Mr. Jones	
Mr. Quinn	
Mr. Nease	
Miss Gandy	

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS**

FILE NO. **50-5**

REPORT MADE AT Chicago, Ill.	DATE WHEN MADE 5/16/38	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 4/22, 23/38	REPORT MADE BY [REDACTED] (b)(7)(C)
TITLE UNKNOWN SUBJECTS; ROY WILKINS - COMPLAINANT			CHARACTER OF CASE PEONAGE
SYNOPSIS OF FACTS <div style="text-align: center;"> GEORGE A. BLANEY, Chicago, informed had no information <div style="background-color: black; width: 400px; height: 100px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> R.U.C. <div style="background-color: black; width: 150px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> </div> <p>REFERENCE: Report of Special Agent [REDACTED] New York City, dated 2/1/38. (b)(7)(C)</p> <p>DETAILS: AT CHICAGO, ILLINOIS:</p> <p>GEORGE A. BLANEY, Negro Attorney, 2456 South State Street, upon interview informed that he was an attorney as well as a member of the Endress Committee for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the offices of this association being just across the hall from those of Mr. BLANEY. He informed that during November, 1937, upon receipt of the original complaint in this matter from [REDACTED] he merely relayed the information to the national headquarters of the association at New York City in the absence of the President of the association at Chicago. He stated that he furnished the national headquarters of New York of this Association with a copy of the original letter which [REDACTED]</p>			
DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES			
Bureau - 3 Little Rock - 3 Chicago - 2		<div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">50-1359-7</div> <div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold;">MAY 18 AM</div> <div style="font-size: 1.2em;">MAY 19 1938</div>	

[REDACTED] BLAKEY was unable to locate his file on this matter, and, accordingly, informed Agent that he could not furnish him with any other information, thereupon suggesting an interview with [REDACTED] BLAKEY stated that in the event he found his file containing a copy of the original of this letter from [REDACTED] he would advise the Chicago Office of this Bureau in order that the file might be made available to an Agent. (b)(7)(D)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO OFFICE OF ORIGIN.

Post Office Box 1400
Little Rock, Arkansas
May 29, 1938

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to your letter dated May 27, 1938
(50-1359), pertaining to the information contained in a letter directed
by the Memphis Office to the Bureau dated May 16, 1938, with respect to
[REDACTED] b7C

Reference is respectfully made to the cases entitled as
follows:

[REDACTED] Peenage", Little Rock Origin
[REDACTED] SUBJECTS; HOT WILKINS, Complainant; Peenage",
Little Rock Origin, Bureau file 50-1359
[REDACTED] Peenage", Little Rock Origin, Bureau
file 50-1349

All of these cases reflect an initial complaint similar
or identical with that contained in the letter of the Memphis Office dated
May 16, 1938, and it is particularly noted that that letter reflects the
lawful conviction of [REDACTED]
As indicated in the above file, these facts have been presented to the
United States Attorney at Little Rock, Arkansas, and he has consistently
advised that so long as the plantation constitutes a regular detention
farm for prisoners, and so long as prisoners are lawfully charged and
sentenced in a court of law, they are lawfully detained and there is no
indication of violation of the Peenage Statute.

It is noted that in the case entitled "[REDACTED]"

[REDACTED] the plantation owned and operated by [REDACTED] is a
regular detention farm for St. Francis, Cross and Woodruff Counties, and
Hot Wells, Arkansas, the point of the alleged offense, is located in
Hot Wells, Arkansas.

RECORDED 50-1359-8
It is respectfully requested that this office and the Memphis
Office be advised whether an investigation is desired in view of the fact
that the United States Attorney's office holds that these facts, as
indicated, do not constitute a violation of the Peenage Statute.

Very truly yours,

R. A. PLATTEN,
Special Agent in Charge.

cc - Memphis
AIR MAIL - SPECIAL DELIVERY